

November 18, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PSC FORMS 8-1-1 DIGGERS HOTLINE TASK FORCE

LINCOLN – An 11-member task force has been appointed by the Nebraska Public Service Commission to address issues surrounding implementation of 8-1-1 dialing for the One Call Before You Dig program.

On March 14, 2005, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released an order that requires the use of 8-1-1 as the abbreviated dialing code for providing advanced notice of excavation to underground facility operators. The order delegates to states the authority to address the technical and operational issues associated with the implementation of the 8-1-1 code and sets April 13, 2007, as the deadline for implementation.

In 1994 the Nebraska Legislature passed a law called “The One Call Notification System Act” which requires that everyone who excavates (or otherwise disturbs the surface) must first call the state one-call notification center (Diggers Hotline) at least two business days before they start work. The requirements of the One Call Act were implemented with the establishment of Diggers Hotline of Nebraska, which is operated by a board of directors and certified by the Nebraska State Fire Marshall. The implementation of the 8-1-1 code will provide direct access to the established Diggers Hotline call center from any place in the state.

The Task Force has its first meeting scheduled for December 2 in Lincoln at the Commission offices, and by telephone conferencing for members unable to attend in person. Members are: Lance Loschen of Lincoln, Lincoln Wastewater Systems; Teresa Wilgus of Omaha, Diggers Hotline of Nebraska; Clark Conklin of Lincoln, Nebraska State Fire Marshal’s Office; Cindy Bittinger of Clarks, Clarks Telecommunications; Dave Clampit of Lindstrom, Minnesota, Frontier Communications; Dwaine Vasicek of Wahoo, Frontier Communications; Gayland Alukonis of Omaha, Qwest; Mike Whaley of Littleton, Colorado, Qwest; Chuck Simino of Lincoln, Sprint; Richard Cumpston of Grand Island, Alltel Wireless; and Don Gray of Lincoln, Nebraska Public Service Commission.

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